



SolidWorks Tips & Tricks

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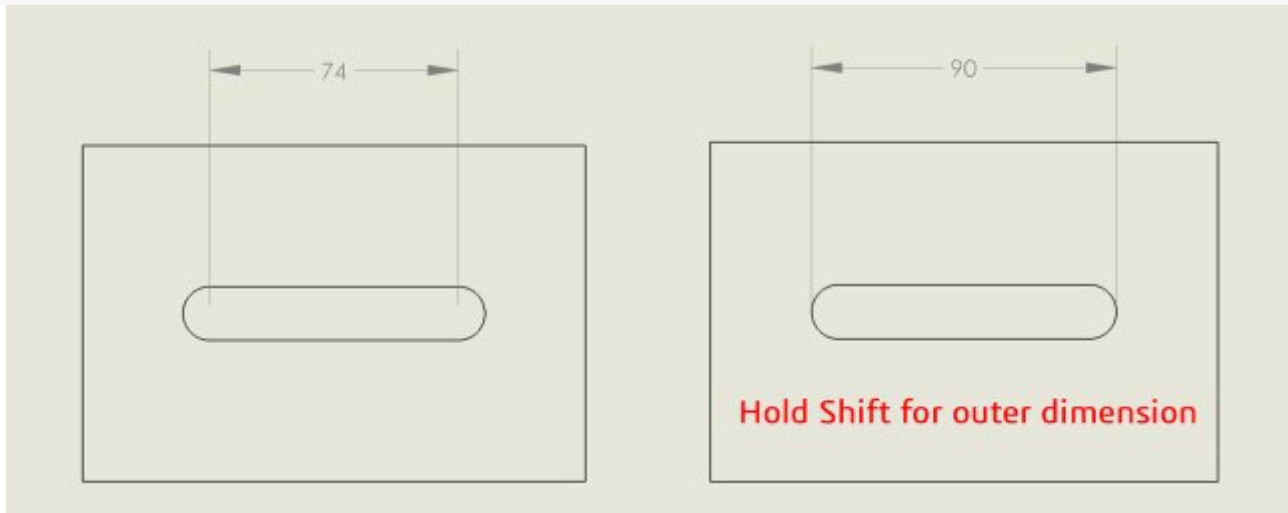
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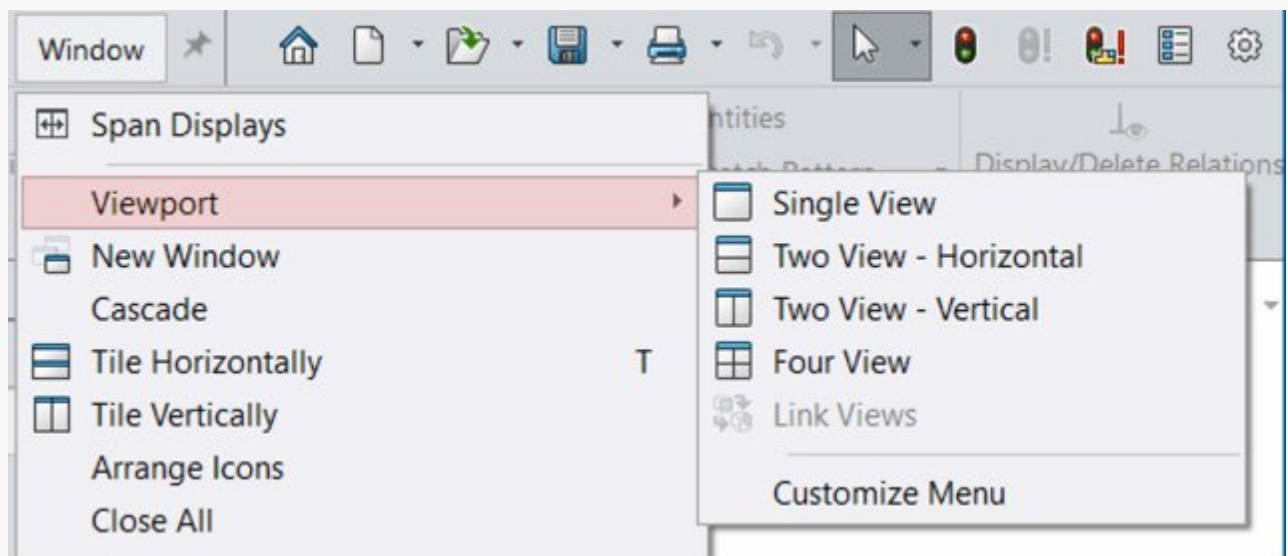
1. Hold Shift when dimensioning arcs

When selecting arcs with the dimension tool, Solidworks defaults to the inner dimension. But if you hold Shift while using the tool, you can easily switch to the outer dimension.



2. Use viewports to see your model from every angle

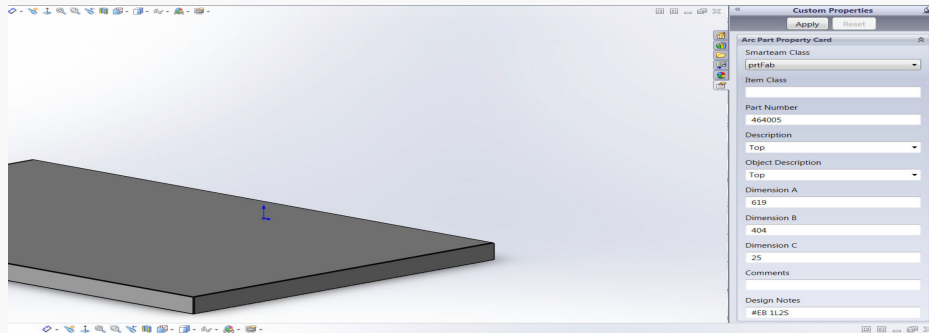
With Solidworks' viewport feature, you can see up to four views of your model at once. Extra viewports are especially handy for 3D sketching, Matrishon explained. By setting each viewport orthogonal to the others (top, right and front views, for instance), you can easily switch focus to the most convenient head-on view as you continue your 3D sketch from one viewport to the next.



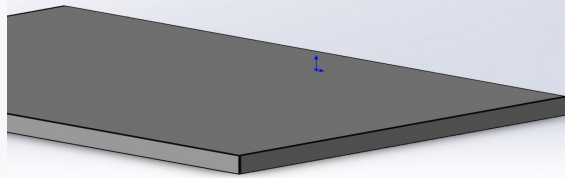
Another option to view the same part, assembly or drawing is to open it in a new Solidworks window (the command under Viewport in the image above).

3. Hide and show the Task Pane with Ctrl + F1

Many Solidworks users like to keep the Task Pane open to view Solidworks resources, custom properties, design libraries and more. If you find it takes up too much prime screen real estate, there's an easy way to toggle it on and off: Ctrl + F1.

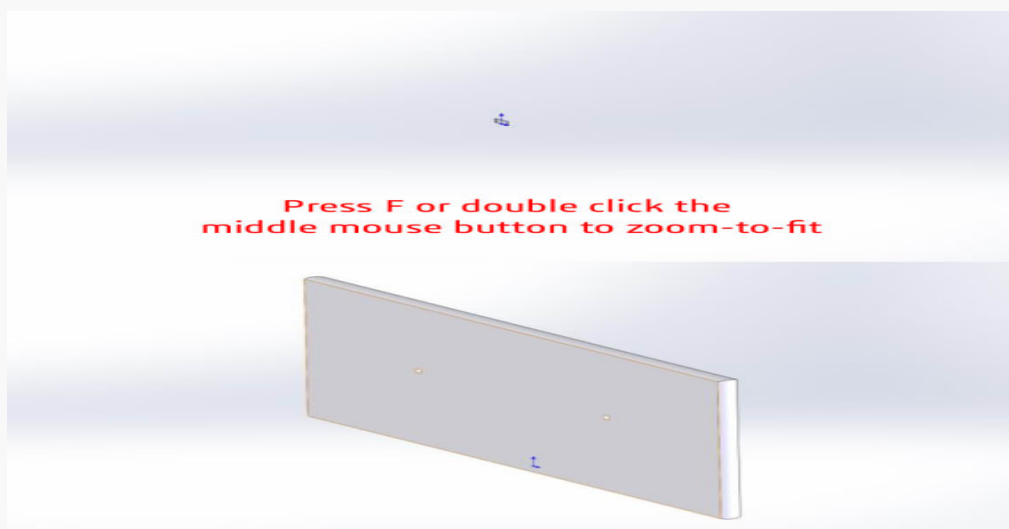


Ctrl + F1 hides/shows the task pane



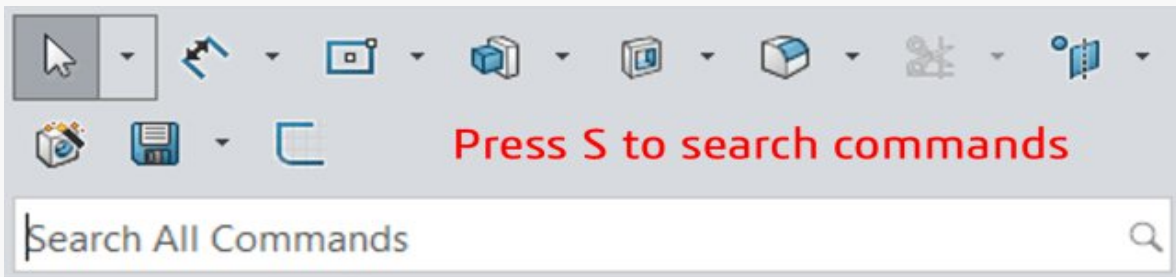
4. Two ways to zoom-to-fit

If you find yourself zoomed in on an extreme closeup of your part, or perhaps looking at it from miles away, there are two easy ways to bring the part to a comfortable view. You can zoom-to-fit by pressing the F key or by double clicking the middle mouse button.



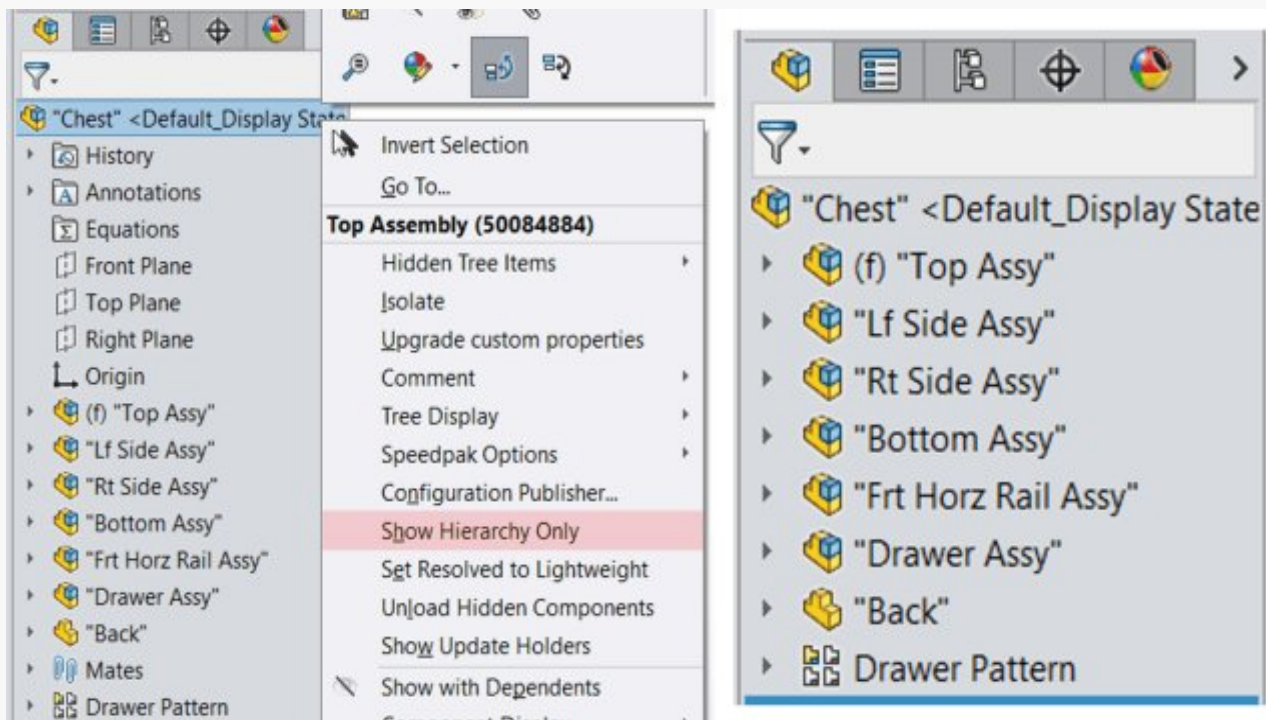
5. Press S to search Solidworks commands

If you're just starting out with Solidworks, or if you want to access a rarely used tool, you may have trouble finding the right command in the graphical interface. Don't worry, you won't have to waste any more time looking for it: simply press S to bring up the Solidworks command search and type the name of the command you're looking for. You can activate it directly from there, or click the eye icon to be shown where in the interface that command resides.



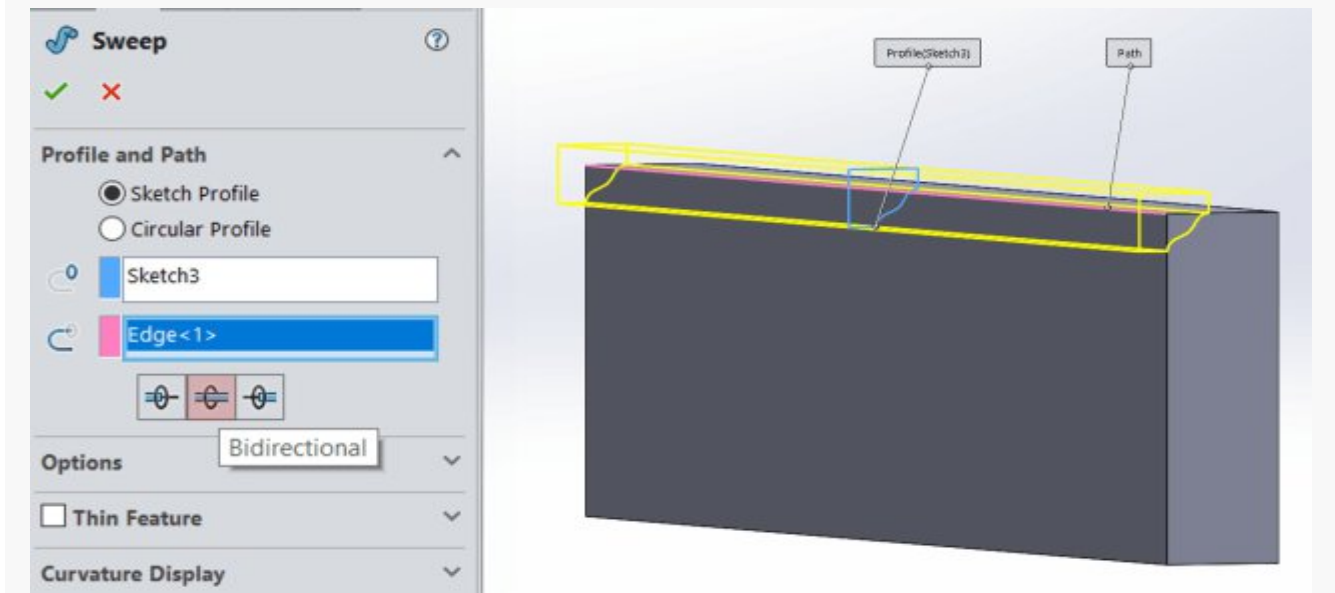
6. Show only the hierarchy of your assembly

You can keep your assembly tree more organized by hiding the planes, origins and mates and focusing only on the assembly structure. Simply right click on the assembly's top level and select "Show Hierarchy Only" in the context menu.



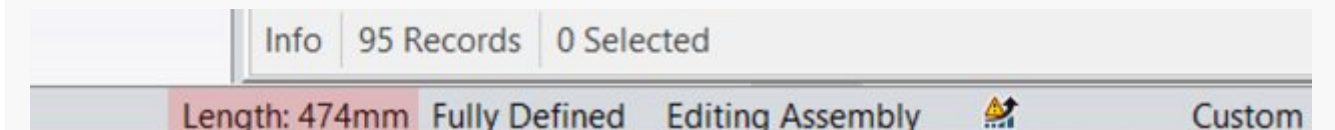
7. Bidirectional sweeps

Are you using the sweep tool to its full extent? Next time you need to make a sweep in both directions, instead of mirroring one sweep or making two sweeps, you can use Solidworks' bidirectional sweep feature. Simple select the bidirectional option in the sweep tool to cut your work in half.



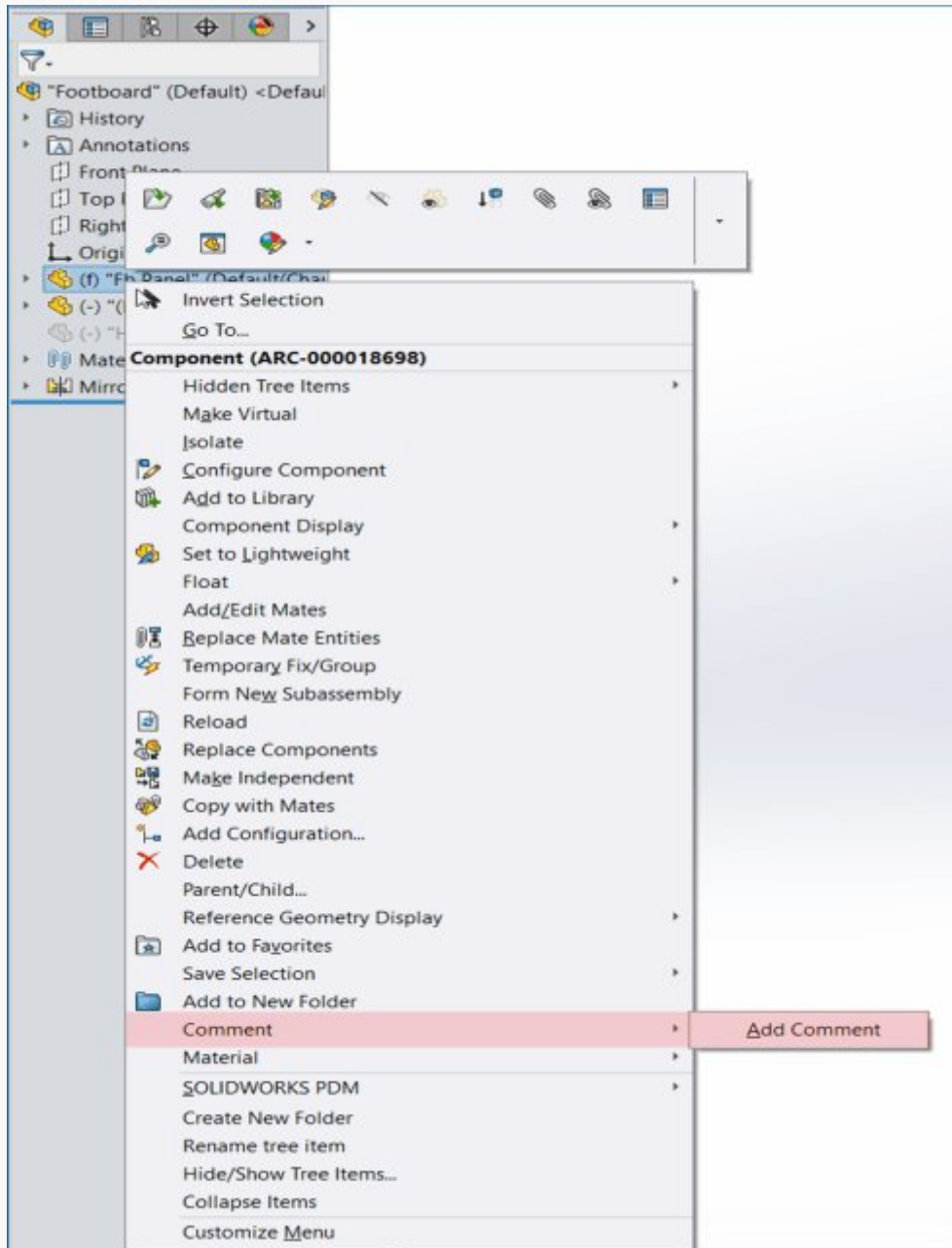
8. Status bar measurement

The measure tool is one way to find a dimension in Solidworks, but a glance to the status bar in the bottom right will also do the trick. If you click on an edge of your model, the status bar will automatically give you its length.



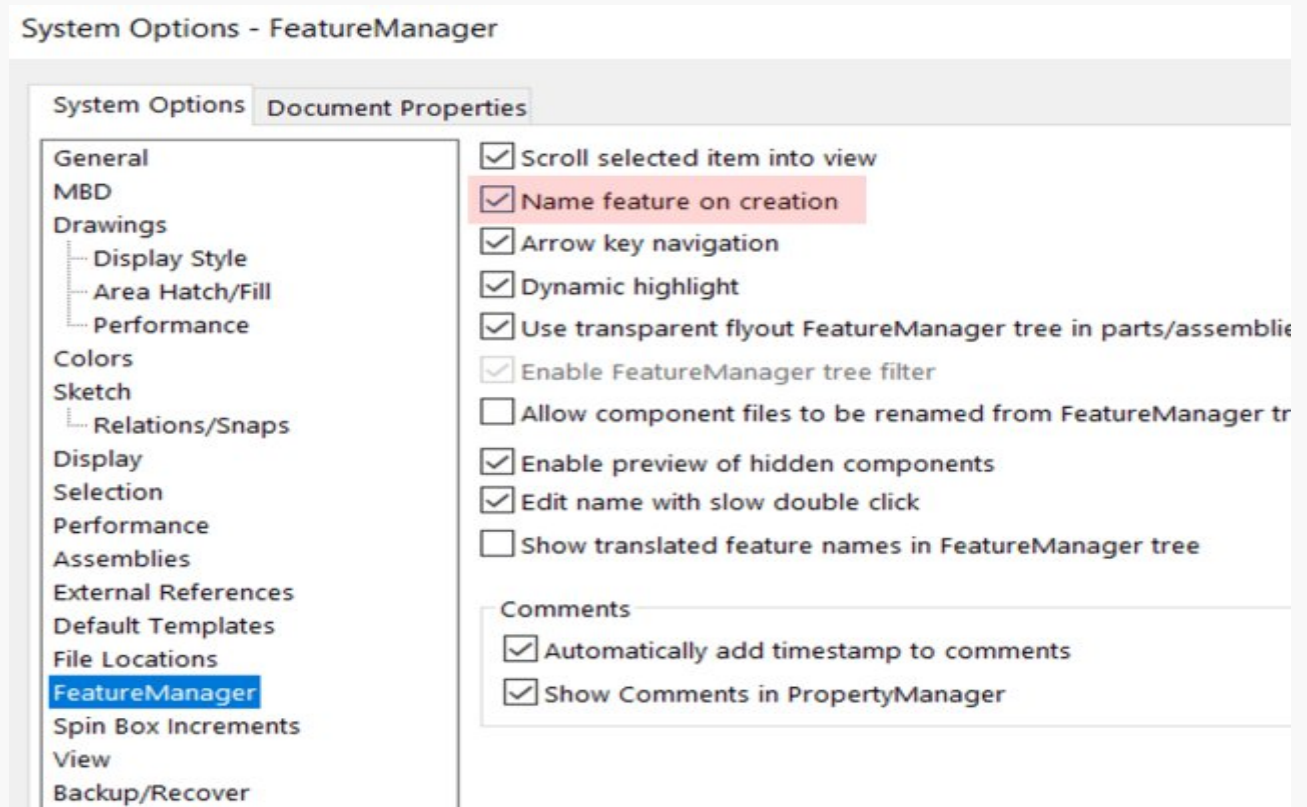
9. Add a comment in Solidworks

Did you know you can add a comment to a part in Solidworks? This excellent feature for design collaboration can be accessed by right clicking on the part in the feature tree and navigating to Comment -> Add Comment. You can set comments to show up whenever the file is opened, and they can also be accessed in the comments folder in the feature tree.



10. Name and rename your features

There are many ways to name and rename Solidworks features. You can name them on creation (see the setting in System Options in the image below), you can click-pause-click on the component, you can right click on the component to adjust its properties, or you can select the component and press F2 to rename it.



Bonus

Keep track of your unsaved work

There's nothing worse than losing an unsaved file to the whims of a computer crash. And while you probably know the shortcut to save your work (Ctrl + S), you may not know that Solidworks keeps track of whether or not your work is saved. If there's an asterisk next to your file name, that file has unsaved changes. Save your work to make the asterisk (and your crash anxiety) go away.



